

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A gemstone having a micro-discrete indicia formed thereon wherein said micro-discrete indicia image was formed using near-field optics, wherein said micro-discrete indicia image has a length no greater than about 10 microns and a height no greater than about 2 microns, said near-field optics resulted in an alter of the color of said gemstone for producing said micro-discrete indicia image.

2. (currently amended) A gemstone according to claim [[2]] 1 wherein said gemstone has a coating thereon such that when said near-field optics is used to form ~~produces~~ said micro-discrete indicia image an ~~by~~ ablation of ~~an~~ image on the surface of said gemstone occurs.

3. Cancelled

4. (original) A method according to claim 2 wherein in said micro-discrete indicia is provided at a predetermined coordinates on said gemstone.

5. (original) A gemstone according to claim 2 wherein said micro-discrete indicia provides information with regard to said gemstone.

6. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 5 wherein said information comprises any of the following:

size, type, manufacturer, retailer, owner, producer, country of origin, mine etc.